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ABSTRACT

Goals and requirements for general education at Miami-Dade Community College are outlined in this proposal of the college's General Education Committee. Twenty-six goals of general education are presented in six categories: Fundamental Skills, The Individual, The Individual and the Future, The Individual and Other Persons and Groups, The Individual and Society, and The Individual and Natural Phenomena. Proposed requirements for the Associate of Arts, Associate of Science, and Associate of General Studies degrees include core courses in five areas--Communications, Humanities, Social Environment, Natural Environment, and The Individual (Psychological and Physical Development). For each course, intended as multi-disciplinary courses to be developed by college-wide faculty teams, a rationale and a list of the specific goals it would meet are presented. Recommendations for the development, objectives, teaching/learning support services, and evaluation of the core courses are included. Additional required and elective general education coursework for each of the associate degrees is also discussed. Basic to the proposal is a Basic Skills requirement mandating demonstrated proficiency in reading, writing, and computational skills in order to complete a degree program. (LH)

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GENERAL EDUCATION PROPOSAL

MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE

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November 1, 1977

JC 770 535

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MIAMI-DADE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
PROPOSAL FOR THE GENERAL EDUCATION PROGRAM

The Miami-Dade Community College general education study, which began in 1975, has as its purpose to recommend changes that will strengthen the overall general education program. During the past two years faculty on all campuses have been involved in discussions of a rationale for general education and the goals of the Miami-Dade general education program. During the past year each campus developed recommendations for implementing the general education goals.

The General Education Committee, using the recommendations of the four campus general education committees and the suggestions of the individual faculty, has adopted the following Proposal. Faculty are encouraged to forward to the Committee their reactions and suggestions for other alternatives, with supporting arguments for their positions. These will be reviewed by the Committee and appropriate changes will be made by the Committee before its final report is sent to the College Committee on Academic Affairs for review and approval. After CCAA has acted on the Proposal, it will be sent to the President's Council for its recommendations to the President for final approval.

The Committee, in adopting this Proposal, followed two fundamental principles, one dealing with faculty and one dealing with students:

(1) No faculty member will lose his or her job as a result of any change in the general education program;

(2) Students will not be penalized in transferring from one campus to another because of any general education requirements on the different campuses.

Reactions from faculty should be as comprehensive as possible and include both areas of support and points of disagreement. There is no required format for the reactions and suggestions; the following, however, are kinds of statements that could be included:

(1) Recommendations with which one agrees;

(2) Recommendations with which one disagrees; reasons for disagreement with particular recommendations and rationales should be clearly stated;

(3) Alternative recommendations presented for those with which there is disagreement.

   (a) Alternative recommendations should indicate what general education goals are addressed.

   (b) How alternative recommendations fit into the Committee's overall proposal should be specified.

The General Education Committee would like to receive all faculty reactions to the Proposal by December 5, 1977. Please send reactions to Dr. Jeffrey Lukenbill, Director, General Education Project, South Campus.

GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

The purpose of the general education program at Miami-Dade Community College is to prepare students to be effective individuals both in their personal lives and in the vocations they choose. The course requirements described below are intended to assist students to meet the general education goals that have been identified. These goals will be found immediately following the requirements listed below. It is important for students to note that the general education goals cannot be fully realized during their time spent at Miami-Dade, but that the general education courses will provide a basis for their pursuit of these goals during their lives.

Total credits required for the A.A., A.S., A.G.S. Degrees: 62 credits

Total general education credits required for the A.A.Degree: 36 credits

Total general education credits required for the A.S. and A.G.S. Degrees: 15 credits

I. Required Courses for Students to Complete the A.A., A.S., and A.G.S. Degrees (15 credits)

Course 1: Communications (3 credits)

Course 2: Humanities (3 credits)

Course 3: The Social Environment (3 credits)

Course 4: The Natural Environment (3 credits)

Course 5: The Individual (Psychological and Physical Development)(3 credits)

II. Additional Required Courses for Students to Complete the A.A.Degree (14 credits)

Course 1: English Composition (3 credits)

Course 2: Humanities: Select one course from a list of courses from the following areas - Art, Drama, Literature, Music, Philosophy, Interdisciplinary Humanities (3 credits)

Course 3: Social Sciences: Select one course from a designated list of courses in the following areas - Anthropology, Economics, Geography, History, Political Science, Psychology, Sociology, Interdisciplinary Social Sciences (3 credits)

Course 4: Natural Sciences: Select one course from a designated list of courses from the following areas - Biology, Chemistry, Earth Sciences, Mathematics, Physics, Interdisciplinary Natural Sciences (3 credits)

Course 5: Physical Development: Select courses to total 2 credits from the designated list in the following areas - Health Maintenance (2 credits), Physical Activities (specific activities courses to be designated later) (2 credits)

III. Required Electives for Students to Complete the A.A.Degree (7 credits)

Students in A.A. programs must complete 7 credits of elective courses from a broad list of designated courses. These courses, taught in both the Arts and Sciences and the Occupational areas, are ones for which general education credit is appropriate.

IV. Basic Skills Requirements

All students must demonstrate minimum proficiency in reading, writing, and computational skills in order to complete a degree program. The following procedures will be followed in order to meet this basic skills requirement:

(1) All students will be assessed (tested) prior to their first registration at M-DCC, to determine their proficiency in reading, writing, and computational skills.

(2) Those students who meet the minimum proficiency requirements in the skill areas on this initial assessment will be certified as having met the basic skills requirements.

(3) Those students who have a deficiency in one or more of the basic skills will be required to register for a developmental experience (a designated course, lab, etc.) to improve the skills in which they are deficient. The student must continue to enroll in the developmental experience until the minimum competency in the basic skill has been attained.

(4) A minimum proficiency in reading and writing, as determined on the initial assessment, is a prerequisite for enrollment in the required core communications course.

(5) Students who have lesser deficiencies in basic skills which would make it difficult for them to complete the objectives in some courses will be strongly advised to register in a course or lab in order to improve these skills.

PROPOSED GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

(62 Credit Graduation Requirement)

DEGREE PROGRAM	TOTAL CREDITS	COURSES				
A.A. A.S. A.G.S.	15	COMMUNICATIONS* (3 cr.)	HUMANITIES (3 cr.)	SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT (3 cr.)	NATURAL ENVIRONMENT (3 cr.)	INDIVIDUAL (PSYCHOLOGICAL & PHYSICAL) (3 cr.)
		These are single, multi-disciplinary courses to be developed by College-wide faculty teams.				
A.A.	14	ENGLISH COMPOSITION (3 cr.)	HUMANITIES Art Drama Literature Music Philosophy Interdisciplinary Humanities (3 cr.)	SOCIAL SCIENCES Anthropology Economics Geography History Political Science Psychology Sociology Interdisciplinary Social Sciences (3 cr.)	NATURAL SCIENCES Biology Chemistry Earth Sciences Mathematics Physics Interdisciplinary Natural Sciences (3 cr.)	PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT Health Maintenance Physical Activities** (2 cr.)
		This is a single course.	One course must be selected from each group; the courses to be included in the groups will be determined by each campus.			Select either the Health Maintenance or 2 cr. of Physical Activities.
A.A.	7	ELECTIVES				
		Select 7 credits from a Collegewide list of courses.				

*Prerequisite: minimum proficiency in reading and writing basic skills.

**As many as 3 credits in physical activity courses may be counted towards an A.A. or A.S. degree.

GOALS OF GENERAL EDUCATION

I. FUNDAMENTAL SKILLS

1. The students will be able to speak, listen, write, and read competently and in an organized and critical manner.

2. The students will be able to communicate effectively with individuals in the different aspects of their lives.

3. The students will be able to carry out computations basic to producers and consumers.

4. The students will be able to use systematic, critical, and creative processes, drawing from knowledge of appropriate disciplines, to identify problems, analyze alternate solutions, and make decisions.

II. THE INDIVIDUAL

5. The students, based on their knowledge of themselves, will develop capability for self-direction.

6. The students will know the major aspects of the biological, psychological, and social natures of man.

7. The students will be able to take the necessary procedures to develop and maintain their physical and mental health.

8. The students will develop the capability for making worthwhile use of their leisure or discretionary time.

9. The students will assess the impact of prejudices on their attitudes and behaviors.

10. The students will develop appreciation for and find value in participating in aesthetic and creative activities; and they will have knowledge of the major areas of human self-expression, especially as related to the reflection of the human spirit in aesthetic forms and humanistic ideas.

III. THE INDIVIDUAL AND THE FUTURE

11. The students will analyze and assess their personal values and their life goals in order to integrate these with their decision-making.

12. The students will investigate career choices that are compatible with their abilities, interests, and opportunities.

13. The students will set educational objectives in view of their tentative or definite career choices and non-career pursuits.

14. The students will be aware of their responsibility for continued learning throughout life.

IV. THE INDIVIDUAL AND OTHER PERSONS AND GROUPS

15. The students will know the characteristics of effective interpersonal relationships and will assess their interpersonal skills.

16. The students will apply principles of interpersonal skills in order to make their own human relationships, especially in the family or another primary group, more mutually satisfying.

17. The students will analyze how groups function, within and apart from organizational structures, and will assess their own skills in working with groups.

18. The students will know characteristics of the cultures of other ethnic and racial groups, and will assess their own ability to establish positive relationships with individuals who have different ethnic and racial identities.

V. THE INDIVIDUAL AND SOCIETY

19. The students will have knowledge of and appreciation for major accomplishments of various cultures, and will evaluate their impact on contemporary society.

20. The students will have knowledge of significant philosophies and life styles which societies and individuals have adopted, and will assess their relevance to themselves and to society.

21. The students will have knowledge of the major ideas and events which have shaped United States society, as compared with other societies.

22. The students will have knowledge of the organization and functioning of the United States society and will apply their knowledge of social principles as enlightened individuals.

VI. THE INDIVIDUAL AND NATURAL PHENOMENA

23. The students will know the basic components, structure, and functioning of natural phenomena.

24. The students will have knowledge of the philosophy of science and of principles that are basic to scientific inquiry and research.

25. The students will analyze human interaction with the natural environment, will assess the quality of their local environment, and will assume responsibility for their personal impact on the environment.

26. The students will be sensitive to the effects of technology upon the individual, society, and the natural environment.

DISCUSSION OF GENERAL EDUCATION REQUIREMENTS

In the following sections the General Education Proposal is divided into several areas. In each area the particular recommendations of the Committee are presented with rationales for their adoption. When faculty give their reactions to the General Education Proposal, they should address themselves to these specific recommendations, including rationales for any alternative suggestions they may propose, as well as noting areas of support.

1. General Requirements for the A.A. Degree

The Committee recommends that courses to meet the 36 credit general education requirement for the Associate in Arts Degree be grouped in three categories:

(1) Core courses - Specific courses required for all students;

(2) Distribution groups - Groups of courses from the areas of Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Physical Development from which students can choose;

(3) Electives - A large group of general education courses from which students can choose freely.

Rationale: All campus general education committees recommended a required core and three campuses recommended distribution groups. The position of many faculty is that students today need suitable direction to achieve the general education goals, and a structure of required courses and other learning experiences is appropriate. The Committee decided that to have a required core and then all electives was too broad and provided inadequate structure; on the other hand, it decided that to have a required core and then all distribution requirements was too much structure. This recommendation seems to be an appropriate balance between increased specification and broadening of choices in electives to include some courses previously excluded. The core courses deal directly with the general education goals, the distribution groups allow for the introduction of the disciplines, and the electives provide a broad range of choices. It is also important to the logic of the program that a result be that students with deficiencies in reading and writing considerably improve these skills before beginning the distribution and elective courses.

2. Required Core Courses for the A.A. Degree (15 credits)

The Committee recommends that the required courses of the A.A. degree include a 3 credit course in each of five areas:

(1) Communication Skills (Goals 1, 2, 4)

(2) Humanities (Goals 2, 8, 10, 19)

(3) The Social Environment (Goals 4, 6, 19, 20, 21, 22)

(4) The Natural Environment (Goals 4, 6, 7, 23, 24, 25, 26)

(5) The Individual (Psychological and Physical Development) (Goals 2, 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 23)

Rationale: These five courses are intended to address all of the general education goals, although several of the goals are to be achieved more directly in the advisement/assessment processes. The titles of the courses are purposely only descriptive, because the Committee believes the development of the courses should be undertaken by College-wide faculty teams. The more closely related goals have been grouped together, but the intent is that in the development of these courses the relationships among them should be emphasized. Each of the courses will obviously draw upon more than one discipline, but the courses are not intended to be interdisciplinary in the sense that a course should introduce or deal with all the major disciplines in a given area. The purpose of the core courses is not simply to introduce the many academic disciplines, but rather to assist students in the process of achieving the general education goals. The core courses would provide a valuable experience for all persons in achieving a more useful and satisfying life. Since the core would ordinarily be taken early in a student's program, it will be a positive contribution even to the many who do not complete degrees. It should be noted, however, that students need not take all the core courses in their first terms, since it will be advantageous for some students to immediately enroll in courses that are a part of their specific career program or major.

A. Description of Core Courses

The following descriptions of the core courses indicate the goals which the courses should address and should give a broad overview of the course content. The Committee would emphasize that the development of the course competencies and course objectives would be carried out by faculty who would implement the courses, with appropriate input from faculty in other areas. The delivery methods and the teaching strategies are the prerogative of the campuses, the campus departments, and the individual faculty.

COURSE 1: COMMUNICATIONS

This course will give greatest emphasis to the students' achievement of Goals 1, 2, and 4.

Goal 1: The students will be able to speak, listen, write, and read competently and in an organized and critical manner.

Goal 2: The students will be able to communicate effectively with individuals in the different aspects of their lives.

Goal 4: The students will be able to use systematic, critical, and creative processes, drawing from knowledge of appropriate disciplines, to identify problems, analyze alternate solutions, and make decisions.

The Committee received overwhelming input from faculty throughout the College that emphasis should be given to writing skills. The course should also have objectives dealing with the broad range of communications skills. Since a logical organization of ideas is fundamental to effective communication, attention should also be given to logical processes. The writing objectives should be directed to providing students with the skills necessary for different kinds of writing, including correspondence, reports, summaries, outlines, and notes, as well as the expository essay.

COURSE 2: HUMANITIES

This course will give greatest emphasis to the students achievement of Goals 2, 8, 10, and 19.

Goal 2: The students will be able to communicate effectively with individuals in the different aspects of their lives.

Goal 8: The students will develop their capability to make worthwhile use of their leisure or discretionary time.

Goal 10: The students will appreciate and find value in participating in aesthetic and creative activities; and they will know the major areas of human self-expression, especially as related to the reflection of the human spirit in aesthetic forms and humanistic ideas.

Goal 19: The students will know and appreciate major accomplishments of various cultures, and will evaluate their impact on contemporary society.

The emphasis of this course would be to have the students develop an appreciation for the major creative accomplishments of mankind in the areas of art, architecture, music, drama and literature, as well as an understanding of some of the major philosophic themes and issues. The objectives would be multi-disciplinary, drawing upon the contributions in the various disciplines, in order to encourage life-long interest and participation in aesthetic and intellectual activities.

COURSE 3: THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

This course will give greatest emphasis to the students' achievement of Goals 4, 6, 19, 20, 21, and 22.

Goal 4: The students will be able to use systematic, critical, and creative processes, drawing from knowledge of appropriate disciplines, to identify problems, analyze alternate solutions, and make decisions.

Goal 6: The students will know the major aspects of the biological, psychological, and social natures of man.

Goal 19: The students will know and appreciate major accomplishments of various cultures, and will evaluate their impact on contemporary society.

Goal 20: The students will know significant philosophies and life styles which societies and individuals have adopted, and will assess their relevance to themselves and to society.

Goal 21: The students will know major ideas and events which have shaped United States society, as compared with other societies.

Goal 22: The students will know the organization and functioning of the United States society and will apply their knowledge of social principles as enlightened individuals.

The course objectives should emphasize the nature, historical development, and influence of institutions involving economic, social, and political factors which have helped shape the United States society. Attention should also be given to the nature of the U. S. Constitution and how these various factors influenced its development. The students' understanding should be the basis for their perceiving and appreciating the similarities and differences found in other societies.

COURSE 4: THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT

This course will give the greatest emphasis to the students' achievement of Goals 4, 6, 7, 23, 24, 25, and 26.

Goal 4: The students will be able to use systematic, critical, and creative processes, drawing from knowledge of appropriate disciplines, to identify problems, analyze alternate solutions, and make decisions.

Goal 6: The students will know the major aspects of the biological, psychological, and social natures of man.

Goal 7: The students will be able to take the necessary procedures to develop and maintain their physical and mental health.

Goal 23: The students will know the basic components, structure, and functioning of natural phenomena.

Goal 24: The students will know the philosophy of science and principles that are basic to scientific inquiry and research.

Goal 25: The students will analyze human interaction with the natural environment, will assess the quality of their local environment, and will assume responsibility for their personal impact on the environment.

Goal 26: The students will be sensitive to the effects of technology upon the individual, society, and the natural environment.

The objectives of this course would address the history and development of scientific thought and the philosophy of science, as well as the methods used in the natural sciences. Contemporary ideas, issues, and trends in the scientific disciplines (biology, physics, chemistry, astronomy, earth science, etc.) should be considered, together with the impact of science and technology on the environment and on the lives of people.

COURSE 5: THE INDIVIDUAL (PSYCHOLOGICAL AND PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT)

This course will give the greatest emphasis to the students' achievement of Goals 5, 6, 7, 9, 11, 15, 16, 17, 18, and 23.

Goal 5: The students, based on their knowledge of themselves, will develop capability for self-direction.

Goal 6: The students will know the major aspects of the biological, psychological, and social natures of man.

Goal 7: The students will be able to take the necessary procedures to develop and maintain their physical and mental health.

Goal 9: The students will assess the impact of prejudices on their attitudes and behaviors.

Goal 11: The students will analyze and assess their personal values and their life goals in order to integrate these with their decision-making.

Goal 15: The students will know the characteristics of effective interpersonal relationships and will assess their interpersonal skills.

Goal 16: The students will apply principles of interpersonal skills in order to make their own human relationships, especially in the family or another primary group, more mutually satisfying.

Goal 17: The students will analyze how groups function, within and apart from organizational structures, and will assess their own skills in working with groups.

Goal 18: The students will know characteristics of the cultures of other ethnic and racial groups, and will assess their own ability to establish positive relationships with individuals who have different ethnic and racial identities.

Goal 23: The students will know the basic components, structure, and functioning of natural phenomena.

The objectives of this course should stress the students' understanding of themselves as unique individuals responsible for decisions affecting their psychological and physical well-being. Stress should be given to aspects of health maintenance, including nutrition, substance abuse, and physical activity, as well as to stress reduction and the clarification of one's values. Concepts from appropriate disciplines should provide the students with a framework for self-assessment and positive action planning.

B. Development of Core Courses

The Committee recommends an extensive development of the College-wide core courses. The following are aspects of the development process.

(1) Development of the Curriculum

a. The course content should be formulated in terms of measurable course objectives or competencies.

b. While course objectives should be developed on a College-wide basis, the delivery methods and teaching strategies are the concern of the campuses.

c. The faculty on the four campuses should be the primary source for identifying the course objectives and/or competencies.

d. The faculty in the appropriate departments should review and critique the proposed course objectives and/or competencies.

e. The responsibility for the development of each core course is not solely that of one department or division. Faculty from each general education area should have input into the development of all the core courses and should participate in the review process.

f. A committee, comprised primarily of faculty from the four campuses, should be appointed to develop each course.

(2) Core Course Objectives

a. The objectives should provide for the following:

i. the integration of the students' knowledge and experience;

ii. the relationships among the core courses and their objectives;

iii. the contribution of various disciplines in achieving the course objectives; this suggests a multi-disciplinary rather than a required interdisciplinary approach;

iv. the application of knowledge (in terms of Bloom's taxonomy, objectives beyond the knowledge level);

v. experiential learning opportunities;

vi. appropriate affective objectives;

vii. value-formation and ethical considerations.

b. The objectives should emphasize a broad, more universal application, rather than a narrow application or a mere acquisition of fact and detail.

c. The objectives should support the communications objectives, especially those dealing with reading and writing.

(3) Development of Teaching/Learning Support Services

Because of the large enrollment in the core courses it would be feasible to develop outstanding resources to provide as many options as possible for instructors and to provide more tools for dealing effectively with a more diverse student body. It would be up to the campuses and to individual faculty members to use their creative abilities to determine how to use these resources.

a. Delivery Options

i. Resources should be developed to facilitate a variety of delivery methods; resources should be available for instruction in ordinary classroom situations, for large and small groups, for individualized instruction, for independent study, for interdisciplinary approaches, and for lecture and discussion modes.

ii. Pre-assessment instruments should be developed to provide for certifying students who have already attained the course objectives and/or competencies.

b. Support Resources

i. Instructors should be provided a variety of materials from which they can draw, including print materials, visuals, audio tapes, etc.

ii. The application of the RSVP system should be made available for use in each course.

iii. Students should have available special support materials to assist them in the completion of the course objectives; these materials might include vocabulary development, outlines of content, bibliographies or references to other materials, audio reviews, review tests, etc. The support material should be located in an easily accessible area.

c. Experimental Efforts

i. Study should given to developing the support materials necessary to permit the introduction of the "mastery learning" concept for these core courses; the emphasis should be on students mastering the course material (achieving the objectives) and not simply completing at least a minimum amount of work in a specified length of time (a term).

ii. Since the "mastery learning" approach implies the use of whatever time is necessary for students to achieve the course objectives, procedures should be investigated to allow students both to extend the time to complete the core courses beyond the standard term boundaries, and to accelerate the completion of objectives, thereby reducing the time spent on the core courses.

(4) Evaluation

Research should be conducted on a systematic basis to assess the effectiveness of the core courses in enabling students to achieve the course objectives and competencies, and thereby to reach the general education goals.

Rationale: The required core courses will have students with the broadest range of abilities. By providing extensive resources and supplementary materials, the College will attempt to assist faculty in individualizing instruction in order to accommodate the varied student abilities and needs.

3. Additional Required Courses and Distribution Groups for the A.A. Degree (14 credits)

As additional general education requirements for A.A. programs, the Committee recommends that the A.A. students be required to take a course in English Composition and to select one course from each of four distribution areas: the Humanities, Social Sciences, Natural Sciences, and Physical Development. The discipline areas for each distribution group listed below are meant to set the framework from which particular courses can be selected by the campuses for that particular group.

HUMANITIES (3 credits)	SOCIAL SCIENCES (3 credits)	NATURAL SCIENCES (3 credits)	PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT (2 credits)
Art	Anthropology	Biology	Health Maintenance
Drama	Economics	Chemistry	Physical Activities
Literature	Geography	Earth Sciences	
Music	History	Mathematics	
Philosophy	Political Science	Physics	
Interdisciplinary Humanities	Psychology	Interdisciplinary Natural Sciences	
	Sociology		
	Interdisciplinary Social Sciences		

Rationale: In addition to completing the core courses which address all of the general education roles, the students in the A.A. programs need courses that introduce them to one or more of the disciplines in the major arts and sciences areas so that they understand the principles and basic methods of the disciplines in these areas. More flexibility is provided to each campus since the campus may designate the courses that will compose the Humanities, Social Science, Natural Science and Physical Activities groups. These choices should be made with concern for the special talents of the faculties of each campus and the particular needs of the campus's students. Where possible, it would be desirable that the campuses include the same courses in the distribution groups. The number of courses in the Humanities, Social Sciences and Natural Science distribution groups should be relatively small. In the Physical Development group the choice would be between a course in Health Maintenance (a new course to be developed) and a series of Physical Activities courses that will be identified later.

In order to ensure that no student will be penalized by transferring from one campus to another, it should be understood that each campus must recognize all the other campuses' courses that are designated for the distribution groups. In other words, if students take a course to meet a distribution requirement on one campus and then transfer to another campus which does not include this particular course in its distribution group, the campus to which they have transferred must recognize that they have met their distribution requirement.

A. Distribution Groups

The Committee recommends that the following criteria be followed in determining courses for the distribution groups:

(1) Each course should address general education goals associated with that area.

(2) The courses should emphasize values, broad principles, approaches to acquiring knowledge, problem solving, major themes, important issues, etc., appropriate to the discipline(s) under study.

(3) The courses should illustrate relationships with other disciplines in the area in achieving the general education goals.

(4) The course should not be one designed specifically as a preparation for a major area of study or for a particular career.

Rationale: The courses selected for the distribution groups should continue to focus on the general education goals, but perhaps with greater attention to the function of one or more specific disciplines in achieving these goals. Thus, the courses in the distribution groups would also begin to prepare students for transfer to upper division institutions and for study in a major. Nevertheless, preparation for a major area of study or for a particular career should not be the primary purpose of the distribution goals.

B. English Composition

The Committee has recommended that all students take a core communications course which has strong emphasis on writing skills. The Committee further recommends that students in A.A. programs be required to take an additional course in English Composition.

Rationale: Perhaps the strongest concern of all faculty on all campuses has been the quality of students' writing. This concern for students' writing ability is national and is found at every institution of higher learning. Thus, the Committee is recommending that in addition to the core communications course which has a strong writing component, that students in A.A. programs be required to take an additional course in English Composition that focuses on longer essay writing and other forms of written composition, rather than on an introduction to or an analysis of literature since this can be an option in the Humanities distribution group. The writing instruction should be functional in that it will prepare students in various programs and with different educational goals to be able to apply writing skills in appropriate situations. Although the English Composition course is not required for A.S. students, those who do develop the A.S. programs certainly have the option of including this course in their program requirements.

C. Exemption from the Natural Science Distribution Requirement for Students with Specified Majors

The Committee recommends that students with specified majors (a list of these majors would be developed) can substitute specified alternatives to meet the Natural Science distribution requirement.

Rationale: It should first be noted that these students are not exempt from the core general education science requirement because the nature of these goals is not strictly disciplinary. There is the opportunity, however, for students to receive credit for such a course by means of credit-by-examination or another assessment alternative. Because of extensive course requirements in certain major areas, such as majors in the Natural Sciences, in Architecture, in Engineering, and in Nursing, students in these majors would be allowed to replace the distribution Natural Science course with a specific, approved course from their major.

D. Physical Education

The Committee recommends that as many as three Physical Education Activities credits be allowed to count toward graduation for the A.A. and the A.S. degrees.

Rationale: The Committee believes that physical development and health maintenance are important aspects of education in today's world. The Florida Articulation Committee has recently approved a recommendation that physical education credits will be counted in the credit requirement for a degree. Thus, this present General Education Proposal includes physical development in its general education requirements. Since there are no physical development requirements for the A.S. degree, the Committee

supports this recommendation that will enable students who have electives to take up to three credits in the physical education area from activities courses and the new health maintenance course.

4. Elective General Education Courses for the A.A.Degree (7 credits)

The Committee recommends that the courses for the general education electives (7 credits) include courses from any instruction area, both Arts and Sciences and Occupational and Technical, so long as these courses meet the criterion of addressing at least several general education goals.

Rationale: Students in A.A. programs are required to complete 7 credits from a College-wide list of courses specified as meeting general education requirements. Each campus will have input in determining which courses will be included on the College-wide list. Courses will be considered on an individual basis in order to determine whether or not they are suitable for inclusion. The list of courses should be extensive, providing students with a variety of choices in a number of areas; it should be more inclusive rather than exclusive. The main criterion for determining these courses is that a course designated as a general education elective should clearly address at least several general education goals. Using this criterion, it should be clear that most courses from the Arts and Sciences and many from the Occupational and Technical areas could be included in such a list.

5. General Education Requirements for the A.S. Degree (15 credits)

The Committee recommends that the general education requirement for the Associate in Science Degree be the 15 credit core that is recommended for the A.A. Degree.

Rationale: The general education goals have been identified for all students. The five core courses address all the goals and stress the integration in the students' learning. To omit one or more of the courses would seriously reduce the potential effectiveness of these courses to assist students to achieve the general education goals.

Many of the A.S. programs have many specialized courses approved by the advisory boards, so that there may seem to be little flexibility for the introduction of additional general education courses. Thus, the specialized courses in those programs should be reviewed carefully. It should be noted that because the degree program is 62 credits and because 2 credits in physical education would no longer be required for A.S. students, there would be a little more opportunity to include the 15 core credits in the A.S. program.

6. General Education Requirements for the A.G.S. Degree (15 credits)

The Committee recommends that the general education requirement for the Associate in General Studies Degree be the 15 credit core that is recommended for the A.A. Degree.

Rationale: Although the purpose of this degree program is to provide the greatest degree of flexibility possible for students who choose not to complete the A.A. or A.S. Degree, it is important that all students address the general education goals. The five core courses would not seem to restrict unduly those students who wish to complete the A.G.S. Degree; 47 of the 62 credits can be elected without any restrictions.

7. Assessment of Basic Skills

The Committee recommends that all entering students be assessed to determine their competency in basic skills, specifically reading, writing and computation, and that whenever possible this assessment be made prior to the students' registration for courses.

Rationale: One essential element of proper advisement of students is a knowledge of the student's proficiency in basic skills. The purpose of this assessment is not to label or to categorize students. The results should be given to students as information to help them understand their own strengths and weaknesses. The assessment would also be the basis for assigning students with severe deficiencies to developmental basic skills experiences.

A. Students With Severe Basic Skills Deficiencies

The Committee recommends that all entering students who are assessed to have severe deficiencies in basic skills be required to enroll in developmental experiences.

Rationale: Students with severe deficiencies are unlikely to be successful in classes that require any significant use of their basic skills. To ensure that these students achieve general education Goals 1 and 3, it seems necessary to do more than simply advise such students to work on these skills. The Committee recognizes the dangers of such a requirement: that the student's self-concept could be damaged by being labeled as "remedial"; that students could enroll in the developmental

experiences without proper motivation; that the campus developmental services could be labeled as "remedial," thereby reducing the enrollment of other students who have only moderate deficiencies or who have enrichment goals; and that high percentages of minority students might be enrolled in these developmental experiences. The Committee believes, however, that this requirement can be administered carefully and with attention to these potential dangers so that they are minimized. Furthermore, with the implementation of the Florida policy to assess the functional literacy of all students before graduation from high school (students who cannot pass this functional literacy test will be given certificates of attendance instead of graduation diplomas), it seems imperative to give specific attention to these non-graduates, with severe basic skills deficiencies, who enroll at Miami-Dade.

The Committee supports the commitment of the College to provide appropriate services to the adults in its service areas. Those with severe deficiencies in basic skills are handicapped in a way that has a negative impact on the teaching/learning processes for all. Thus, improvement is essential early in the student's career at the College.

The minimum proficiency levels for reading, writing, and computation skills will be determined on a College-wide basis by faculty who have experience and who are involved in these areas. As a very broad indication of the proficiency levels that would be a minimal requirement, students might be expected to read and comprehend typical material in the Miami Herald, and to perform basic arithmetic operations, including addition, subtraction, multiplication, division, the use of fractions, decimals, and percentages in practical applications.

B. Continued Enrollment in Developmental Experiences

The Committee recommends that students who are assessed as having severe deficiencies must continue to enroll in developmental experiences until they have attained the minimum competencies; students must demonstrate competency in reading, writing, and computational skills before graduation.

Rationale: Some students may not be able to attain the minimum level of basic skills required in one term's work. Consequently, these students with severe deficiencies must continue to enroll in a developmental experience until the satisfactory proficiency level has been attained.

C. Minimum Reading and Writing Competency Prerequisite for the Core Communications Course

The Committee recommends that minimum competency in reading and writing be a prerequisite for enrollment in the general education core communications course.

Rationale: Since reading and writing involve the continuous development of specific skills, it would be inappropriate for a student with severe skill deficiencies to enroll in the required communications course, which would have objectives demanding more advanced skills, until the minimum competencies have been attained. It should be understood, however, that these students with severe deficiencies may take other courses, but proper advisement is essential. In many cases it might be advisable to recommend a reduced load for such students.

UNIVERSITY OF CALIF.
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CLEARINGHOUSE FOR
JUNIOR COLLEGES

RELATED RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Students With Moderate Deficiencies in Basic Skills

The Committee recommends that students with basic skills deficiencies which are not severe, but which still will impede their ability to complete course objectives of courses which require these skills, should be strongly advised to enroll in developmental experiences to improve these skills.

Rationale: There are many indications that students at Miami-Dade are not only willing, but anxious to improve their skills in reading, writing, and computation. Students with moderate deficiencies should be encouraged to improve these skills. It is also important that the developmental offerings on each campus not be considered as only "remedial," but that they be experiences open to students of all abilities who wish to improve their performance.

2. Resources for Development Programs

The Committee recommends that the College allocate the necessary resources (including faculty, facilities, and instructional materials) to provide developmental experiences for all those students who need or wish to improve their basic skills.

Rationale: To serve the needs of a large number of students in the basic skills area, it is imperative that the College provide the resources necessary. In some cases these resources may need to be extensive in order to accommodate a large number of students who may wish to participate in the developmental program.

3. Academic Advisement

The Committee recommends that a high priority be given to the improvement of advisement and counseling services by the allocation of additional funds.

Rationale: Several general education goals, especially Goals 12 and 13, concern students making sound educational and career choices. The advisement and counseling services, especially for entering students, seem essential in order to ensure as far as possible that students make appropriate selection of program courses. Although it is difficult to provide support services when these services do not directly generate funding, ways of providing additional allocations for these services should be sought. It is likely that such services will have cost benefits by improving the success of students and thereby reducing attrition.

4. Evaluation

The Committee recommends that the College establish a process for a systematic evaluation of the effectiveness of the general education program, especially the five core general education courses and the English Composition course.

Rationale: It will be very important to evaluate the effectiveness of any changes or new courses in the general education program so that needed adaptations can be made on a regular basis. Such evaluations should focus on student outcomes, that is, how well students achieve the objectives and competencies of the general education courses.